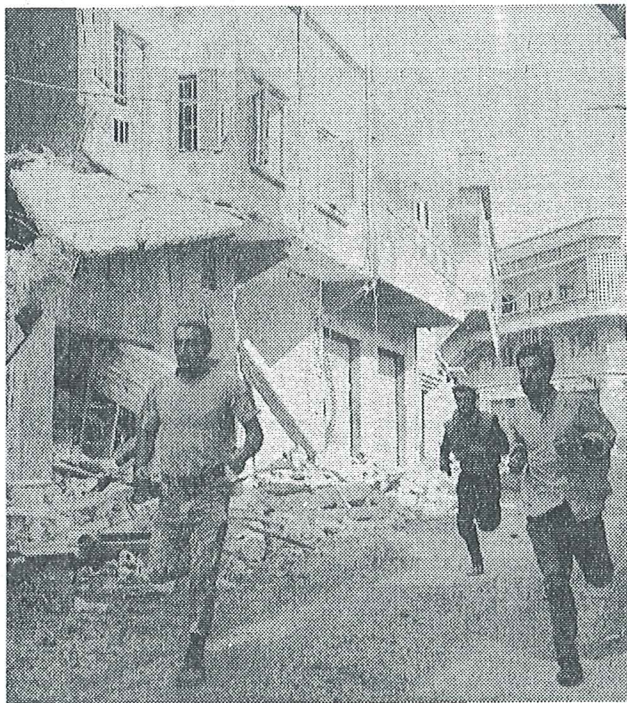




ASSOCIATED PRESS PHOTOS

Three men rush past destroyed buildings to a shelter in the southern Lebanon village of Qana, above, as Israeli gunners pound the area with artillery. At right, residents of Qiryat Shemona, a town in northern Israel, spend the night in a bomb shelter following a Katyusha rocket attack by Hezbollah guerrillas based in Lebanon.



Lebanon Condemns Attacks by Guerrillas

Prime Minister Seeks Aid From Arab States for Refugees, Rebuilding Army

By Nora Boustany
Washington Post Foreign Service

BEIRUT, Lebanon, July 30—Prime Minister Rafik Hariri of Lebanon told Arab foreign ministers tonight that his government does not condone guerrilla attacks launched on northern Israel from Lebanese territory.

Hariri's declaration, addressed to the ministers at a gathering in Damascus, Syria, underlined official resentment in Lebanon that its territory is being used by guerrilla groups largely outside Beirut's control in a Middle East struggle over Israel that stretches far beyond its borders. The message seemed particularly pointed because of its delivery in Syria, whose support is key for the guerrillas and whose own troops control large parts of eastern Lebanon, at the formal request of the Lebanese government.

The Lebanese prime minister urged Arab states to help Lebanon take care of the thousands who have fled Israeli attacks over

the years and in the crucial task of rebuilding its army so it can take charge of parts of the country not under its control. Prompted by a relentless Israeli military offensive against southern Lebanese villages for six days, the Arab foreign ministers went to the Syrian capital for an emergency Arab League meeting to discuss the most extensive and devastating Israeli military action since Israeli troops pushed all the way up to Beirut in 1982.

The Lebanese government has "never once been for the Katyusha policy" Hariri said in his speech tonight, referring to the ongoing rocket attacks by the Iranian-backed Hezbollah guerrilla group. He said Lebanon opposes unregulated guerrilla activity, which has haunted the Beirut government since the early 1970s, inviting harsh Israeli reprisals.

But the key to the problem that may derail peace in the Middle East may not be in Lebanon, several Lebanese officials said.

"For Katyusha attacks to stop, one needs

an agreement with Hezbollah, which only Syria can deliver," said one of Hariri's advisers, who declined to be named. Iran, which opposes the Middle East peace process, has been funneling its military and financial support for Hezbollah in Lebanon via Syria.

Whether the objective of this week's Israeli military strategy is a political message to Syria, however, it has been unfolding on Lebanese soil with Lebanese villagers driven out of their homes. "In a way, Israelis are preparing for peace by destroying half of Lebanon," one Lebanese politician said.

At the same time today, Hariri accused Israel of deciding "to protect its occupation of parts of South Lebanon, with an offensive which has now destroyed those villages and towns that were spared in 1982."

Israel has occupied a six-mile-deep zone within Lebanon's international borders as a buffer and military base policed by a local militia, the South Lebanon Army, to shield

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its northern regions from cross-border guerrilla attacks.

Syria, a tactical ally of Iran, has allowed Hezbollah to operate freely in South Lebanon. The death of seven Israeli soldiers in ambushes and operations by Hezbollah fighters early this month prompted Israel's aerial, gunboat and artillery bombardment, which has flattened entire villages and made many hamlets and farm settlements uninhabitable. All the operations by Hezbollah were carried out on Lebanese soil.

The Lebanese government, which is working on plans for reconstruction and economic revival, now must reshuffle its priorities. Instead, it has to concentrate on the immediate human disaster brought on by the destruction of southern villages and the hundreds of thousands of refugees flocking north for shelter.

Lebanese politicians and analysts argue that the Israelis' declared aim to eradicate Hezbollah from southern Lebanon is actually going to have the reverse effect. Clusters of angry, impoverished and alienated

Shiite villagers who have been victims of the Israeli attacks, they say, can only provide Hezbollah with a fertile recruitment ground.

One unshaven refugee from the

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village of Maaroub who stood despondently outside a refugee center in Beirut's southern suburbs said that, until now, he was a university student. But Ali Ibrahim Taleb said he now had no alternative: "We will

go back as fighters to our village, God willing. There is no other choice."

"To finish Hezbollah, you take the tool out of its hands. We wanted to take the tool out of Hezbollah's hands . . . by providing health care, sanitation facilities, by meeting the people's needs ourselves," one Lebanese official said. "One of the ways in which we wanted to solve the problem of fundamentalism in Lebanon was the creation of a positive economic climate. It is easier to pressure Hezbollah when there is prosperity rather than when there is a breakdown in social services and law and order.

"Now the economic climate is bleak and the social climate is going to be pretty chaotic," he added.

The momentum the Lebanese government was trying to create by boosting the confidence of the Lebanese here and abroad to invest in the reconstruction of their own country has been shattered, the official said.

"What happened this week is going to rock the priorities of the government. We were trying to bring back refugees to their homes in small groups of 10 and 20, and now we have over 200,000 refugees again at Beirut's doorstep," he said. "Can you tell a southerner whose house is destroyed, don't occupy this house which belongs to someone else, don't build illegally? It would be inhuman."

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